THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

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This is a slightly modified form of a lecture. While it is not a formal research report, it is submitted as a research memorandum because it presents some interpretations developed in an ongoing research project. Another and complementary approach to some aspects of the problems discussed here has been presented in Research Memorandum No. 1874, "The Politics of Soviet De-Stalinization."
SUMMARY

The present research memorandum considers the implications of Stalin's death for change in the motivation of Soviet foreign policy. The operative aim of the politics of cold war as practiced by Stalin after World War II was total control of foreign territory and people. The Stalinist picture of the world as cleanly divided between two antagonistic camps was a reflex of this drive for total control. One of its consequences was to exclude the notion of political neutrality or a "third force" in world politics.

The Stalinist politics of cold war left little room for intergovernmental persuasion, but placed great emphasis upon international propaganda. A prime function of the propaganda was to furnish material for a "cult of the U.S.S.R." All the foreigners who participated in the cult were known as "proletarian internationalists." The Stalinist obsession with control, which embraced all the control devices summed up in the phrase "Iron Curtain," was dictated in large part by the urge to cover up the discrepancy between the real Russia and the illusory Russia portrayed in the cult of the U.S.S.R. This had a practical foreign-policy function (to keep the "proletarian internationalists" deluded), but the principal driving force was Stalin's own need for the
illusory Russia, which derived from the same sources in his personality that his need for the Stalin cult did.

Therefore, Stalin's death occasioned a psychological revolution in Soviet foreign policy. The driving concern with totality of control subsided, and there arose in the post-Stalin period a new expansionism of Soviet influence aimed at creating new spheres of influence rather than new satellites. The two-world image faded out, giving way to a picture in which two opposing systems of states compete for preponderance of influence in third states not belonging to either system. Under Khrushchev, Soviet foreign policy also embarked upon a bold new campaign of intergovernmental persuasion. This campaign came to grief in Hungary, so that Soviet foreign policy now stands before a profound dilemma.
I.

What, to start with, is meant by the "psychological" factor in Soviet foreign policy? On a narrow interpretation it could be taken to refer to the role of propaganda as an adjunct of Soviet diplomacy. This is certainly one aspect of the problem, and a significant one. The Russian communists have always attached immense importance to the political missionary function abroad. However, the question considered here transcends the subject of propaganda. It concerns the problem of the changing nature and the predicament of Soviet foreign policy in relation to the function of persuasion.

"Persuasion" is not synonymous with "propaganda"; it is a much broader concept. The term "persuasion," as used here, refers to whatever is done to influence the attitudes and actions of people outside the Soviet Union, and especially those in political authority, in line with the aims, needs, or interests of Soviet foreign policy. Obviously, the professional propaganda operations of the Soviet regime constitute no more than one important instrument of persuasion. Many other kinds of behavior would also meet the test. Cases in point might be diplomatic negotiations with a foreign power, a governmental announcement of plans to cut
the size of the Soviet army, a loan of $100,000,000 to Afghanistan, withdrawal of Soviet forces from Austria, foreign travels by Khrushchev and Bulganin, release of detained foreign nationals from Soviet concentration camps, shipment of Soviet arms to Nasser, or even such lighter events as Ulanova's performances in Covent Garden.

The problem needs to be approached from a historical point of view. In 1952 the pattern of behavior indicated by the Soviet actions listed above was hardly imaginable. Instead of diplomatic negotiations, there were mostly diplomatic recriminations. Soviet arms were being hoarded, for the most part, in home arsenals; the armed forces seemed to be permanently in Austria; no loans were being made, nobody was being released from concentration camps, Ulanova was dancing only in the Bolshoi, and Khrushchev and Bulganin had scarcely any more chance than the ordinary Russian to travel outside the orbit. The cold war was raging in 1952. The turning point was the death of Stalin, which somehow, in a way not yet fully and satisfactorily clarified, radically changed the function of persuasion in Soviet foreign policy. Hence the problem is posed here in terms of the changing nature of Soviet policy. It is
precisely the psychological factor, as affected by Stalin's death, that underlies the change and its consequences.

The problem is intimately connected also with the predicament in which Soviet foreign policy clearly finds itself today. The story of Soviet foreign policy in 1956 can be epitomized in the Biblical adage, "Pride goeth before a fall." The keynote at the start of the year was the triumphant tone of the XXth Party Congress. Anastas Mikoyan, for example, reviewed the current position in foreign affairs as follows:

Striking are the successes of Soviet foreign policy, especially in the past year. Here too the directing collective of the Party has injected a fresh new current, conducting a high-principled, active, and flexible foreign policy, expressed in calm tones and without invective....The Soviet Government has vigorously taken the path of eliminating the defects in our work in the sphere of foreign policy....Certain ossified forms have been cast aside in the work of our diplomacy....The isolation of Soviet social and state organizations from the external world has been liquidated....Let those swaggering Americans who boast of their wealth of today, their "American way of life," join a contest with us in this field, and they will see where more is done for the good of the people, and whose way of life proves better.

The mood, we see, was confident and self-assured. Stalin, thank goodness, was dead and gone. The new collective
administration had taken matters in hand. It had set the wrongs to right, corrected the errors, banished the terror, downgraded the police, gone out into the world. It had ended the stagnation and had charted a new course big with promise, especially in foreign affairs.

So confident, in fact, was this mood that it even seemed possible to set the Congress straight on certain disagreeable facts out of the past, and Khrushchev revealed in closed session a large part of the story of Stalin's crimes. The secret report did not remain secret for very long. Following its disclosure, elemental forces of history began to come into motion. At the year's end, the Soviet army was suppressing a popular revolution in Hungary. Poland was launched on the troubled waters of national communism. Foreign communist parties were in deep political trouble. Intellectuals were deserting the movement in large numbers. The stirrings of a vocal opposition were beginning to be evident inside Russia. Acrid public controversy was taking place between Moscow and Belgrade. The U.S.S.R. was morally isolated again in Europe and large parts of Asia. Invective was back in style. Khrushchev was toasting the memory of Stalin on New Year's eve in the Kremlin. And various people around the world were talking seriously of
such things as the dissolution of the Soviet empire and the beginning of the end of Soviet communism.

Clearly, these were ten months that shook the Soviet world. And here too the search for understanding leads us to the psychological factor. If the post-Stalin change in Soviet foreign policy was peculiarly linked with the function of persuasion, the present predicament is peculiarly indicative of a crisis of Soviet persuasion.

II.

Following the principle of the historical approach, let us briefly reconsider the classic period of the cold war. The final chapter in Stalin's life, from the end of World War II to his death in early 1953, was the culminating period of Stalinism in all departments of Soviet life and policy, including foreign policy. And in foreign policy Stalinism means cold war.

Before the war was over, Stalin was embarked upon a grandiose endeavor of empire-building in countries which were coming under the sway of Soviet forces. Contrary to later Soviet propaganda, very little in the way of a spontaneous revolutionary process took place in any of these countries. In fact, Stalin's policy had by now come to frown on
spontaneous revolutionary movements, as was shown, for example, by Tito's wartime difficulties with Moscow. What Stalin wanted to do -- and succeeded in doing -- in most of Middle Europe can best be described by the Nazi term *Gleichschaltung*, which connotes a process of forcibly bringing a foreign area under control and into conformity. Middle Europe, along with North Korea and, later, China and North Viet-Nam, came to constitute parts of an enormous, expanded Soviet control-sphere with its center in Moscow.

As this process of *Gleichschaltung* developed in 1944 and 1945, stiffening Western reaction and eventual efforts by the United States and Britain to counteract it were met with Soviet intransigence and, increasingly, Soviet hostility. A set pattern of belligerency came to pervade all aspects of Soviet relations with Western and other countries, and especially with the United States.

In Zhdanov's report at the founding meeting of the Cominform in Warsaw in September, 1947, Stalin issued a kind of official declaration of permanent Soviet cold war against the West. From then on until his death, the pattern of belligerency remained rigidly in force, although there were variations in the degree to which hostility was acted out. The expressions ran a gamut from hate propaganda and
diplomacy of invective to warlike acts such as the blockade of Berlin, and systematic shooting down of U.S. aircraft, and finally to outright war by proxy in Korea. An enormous growth of international tension ensued. The director-general of Soviet belligerency all through this period was Stalin himself. Among the totalitarian despots of this century, he was the supreme practitioner of cold war. In pursuing it he was in his element.

So far as the motivation of Soviet foreign policy during this period is concerned, it is useful to distinguish carefully between its formal and operative aims. A formal aim is the object one declares oneself to be seeking; an operative aim is the object implicit in what one actually does. The two may or may not coincide. A government may profess as its first aim the promotion of peace and tranquility when in actual fact it is bent on molesting its neighbors.

The discrepancy between formal and operative objectives has rarely been more glaring than it was in Stalin's foreign policy during the cold war. The "strengthening of peace" was constantly proclaimed as a Soviet aim; but Soviet actions were blatantly inconsistent with the notion of strengthening peace. Another aim frequently if not always unequivocally
declared was that of promoting the cause of the world revolution and liberation of peoples from the "capitalist system of exploitation." Here too a discrepancy appeared, although less obviously. Stalin, as already suggested, had grown strangely hostile to spontaneous revolutionary processes of every kind, including social revolutions from below. He still talked revolution, but he showed in many ways that the revolutionist in him had given way to the hidebound reactionary, enamored of the values of stability, authority, and order. In his essay on linguistics in 1950, he anathematized the Marxian notion that development always takes place through periodic upheavals or "explosions." The very idea of revolutionary explosions had become profoundly distasteful to him. And what about liberation of peoples from "capitalist exploitation"? If this had been Stalin's operative aim, he would have started by liberating the Russian people, by making changes in the Soviet system of state monopoly capitalism -- the most ruthlessly exploitative economic organization in modern world history. Is it possible, then, that what he really aimed to do was replace private with state capitalism, with nationalized economies? No, this was not an operative concern for Stalin. Had it been, he would have softened the Soviet attitude toward Britain and other
European countries which began to nationalize their economies after the war. Or, to take an example still closer to home, he would not have feuded as he did with Tito's Yugoslavia, where Soviet principles of state capitalism had been carried farther after the war than in most of the satellite states.

The crucial operative aim for Stalin was control. This is the conclusion dictated by Stalinist behavior as distinct from the official Stalinist image of that behavior. The operative aim, implicit in all that Stalin did, was to get control of territory and people, and to absolutize that control by every available means, the principal one being police terror. The goal was to expand the reach of the totalitarian structure of command and control which had been built up and perfected inside Soviet Russia during the twenties and thirties.

Examination of the whole postwar process of Soviet Gleichschaltung of foreign lands bears out this judgment about the operative aim. Critical confirmation is afforded by the Stalin-Tito conflict. The issue was Tito's refusal to permit Yugoslavia to be incorporated into the Soviet command and control structure. Tito was among the communist leaders most antagonistic to private capitalism. It was not any deviation on this score, but rather his resistance to Stalin's
claim to absolute Soviet control of Yugoslavia, that underlay the break, which was followed by a Soviet "little cold war" against Belgrade for as long as Stalin lived. The moment he died, it began to slacken.

The Stalinist ideology of cold war reflected this operative aim of total control indirectly in its image of international reality. Speaking in psychiatric terms, this was a dichotomized reality representation. It bifurcated the globe into two "worlds," called the "Soviet camp of peace, socialism, and democracy" and the "American camp of capitalism, imperialism, and war." The political universe was divided cleanly into the white world of Soviet socialist progress and the black world of American capitalist reaction. Stalin had enunciated such a conception of a polarized political universe, with Russia and America as the two antagonistic poles of power, as early as 1927. Twenty years after, it reappeared as the Soviet working conception of international reality; that is, it was acted out in terms of actual foreign policy.

"The struggle of the two camps," stated a Soviet document of 1948, "determines now the fate of the whole world, the fate of mankind. This struggle emerges more and more as the chief moving force of the development of our age toward communism. Here lies the basic content of the political struggle of our time."
The relationship between the dichotomized reality representation and the operative aim of control can be stated very simply: the working criterion of "belongingness" to the one world or the other was the criterion of Soviet control. The white world was coterminous with the expanding circumference of the Muscovite realm of command and control; everything beyond belonged, ipso facto, to the black world. Consequently, the Stalinist definition of the character of a given country's regime turned essentially on the question: Does it constitute a part of the Soviet control-sphere? If so, it was socialist and democratic; if not, capitalist and fascistic. The Yugoslav regime, for example, underwent metamorphosis almost overnight in 1948 from a "people's democracy" into a "police regime of the fascist type." Its actual institutional structure had not, of course, changed at all; but its relation to the Soviet control structure had, and this was crucial for Stalin. Tito's choice, in effect, was to bask in the Soviet sun or inhabit the outer darkness.

There was no geographical or political space between the two worlds, no room for neutralism, no possibility of a "third force," no such thing as nonalignment. Political neutrality in the cold war was just a blind. The pretense of neutrality might be tolerated very grudgingly in a marginal
case, such as Finland's, but never admitted in principle. The notion of an "uncommitted nation" was nothing but a crude political myth devised for devious Western purposes. The Soviet document already quoted said: "The 'third line' or 'third force' concocted by the right-wing socialists is in fact nothing other than a cover for the policy of defense of capitalism and fight against communism. In our epoch there is not, and cannot be, a 'third force'....Two forces, two camps, exist throughout the world."

One of the most fateful political consequences of the captivity of Stalinist policy to this conception was the attitude taken in the Kremlin toward the new Asia. Next to the cold war itself, the most important historical fact of the period following the second world war was the political emergence of Asia from Western tutelage. There was no way to square this fact with the logic of the Stalinist drive for total control and the dichotomized reality representation associated with it. For this would mean recognizing Asia as a "third force" or a space between the worlds. Consequently, Stalin, and therefore Stalinist policy, denied the fact, legislated it out of existence. This was one of the key issues of the famous Varga controversy in 1947. In a book written before the end of the war, the Soviet economist
Eugene Varga had spotted the new trend, the changing relationship of Europe and Asia. On Stalin's orders, the book was condemned, and its author forced to recant what he knew to be absolutely true. The real facts about the new Asia were purged along with Varga. The newly-won national independence of India, Burma, the Philippines, and other former Western dependencies was pronounced a "fiction," a cunning imperialist device for continuing to exercise control over these countries without appearing to do so. According to the logic of the drive for control, they could not be considered "liberated" so long as they had not yet been incorporated into the Soviet control-sphere. Not having changed worlds in this way, they had to remain integral parts of the black world, de facto colonies which the West held on to with the help of "anti-national ruling circles," puppets such as Nehru, U Nu, and others.

Thus, Stalinist policy was predicated on an official delusion of continued Asian bondage to the West. There was no essential change in this regard until Stalin died. There is every reason to believe that most of the men around Stalin were quite aware of the delusive character of this image of the new Asia, and the image of the external world generally. They could see that it was nothing but an externalized
portrait of Soviet-bloc reality, and that the external world was not really like that. Some, it seems, were painfully conscious of the resulting detriment to Soviet Russia's interests as a great power. In effect, the image blocked off the new Asia as a profitable field for Soviet power politics, constraining policy to costly and risky ventures such as the aggression by proxy in Korea. But the men around Stalin could do nothing, or next to nothing, to correct the situation so long as the autocrat was alive and in autocratic control. Few situations could illustrate more convincingly the potential importance of the personality factor in foreign policy.

III.

This brings us back to the question of persuasion. Foreign policy in the normal course of events is largely an activity of intergovernmental persuasion. Persuasion aims at influencing other governments to do or not to do certain things, such as concluding a treaty, settling a dispute, breaking off an old alliance, joining or not joining a new one. The basis of appeal is mutuality of interest. Recognition of the other government's interest in its own continued existence and security is always necessarily
presupposed. The Stalinist politics of cold war were not politics of persuasion, and the foregoing discussion suggests the reason why. When the operative aim is total control, persuasion is not a fit instrument of policy; one form or another of aggression is necessitated. Save for the marginal case, Soviet diplomacy withered on the vine during the years 1945 to 1953; the whole range of intergovernmental activities of persuasion by conventional means was excluded. There was little or no room for negotiation, for example, because what Stalin wanted was not something normally negotiable.

In the case of Yugoslavia, to take it again as an illustration, there was no possibility of negotiating the issue of total Soviet control. The Tito regime might be persuaded to do all sorts of things in the Soviet interest. The one thing it could not be persuaded to do was to part with its independence, but this was precisely Stalin's demand. Following Stalin's death, the Soviet government began to pursue a policy of persuasion vis-à-vis Belgrade, and it is still doing so. The precondition of this, however, was a drastic scaling down of Moscow's demand upon Tito, a change of the operative aim from total control to a relationship of influence. A similar change occurred in the motivation of Soviet policy toward other areas of the non-Soviet world,
with similar results in the form of efforts to persuade. What underlay this change was a lessening of the felt need for control. This, in turn, was a consequence of the fact that when Stalin died the peculiar needs of his personality ceased to determine the motivation of Soviet foreign policy.

Paradoxically, Stalinist policy in the cold war placed the greatest emphasis on international propaganda. Since we ordinarily regard propaganda as an instrument par excellence of persuasion, how explain the fact that propaganda claimed so much Soviet attention and effort at the very time that policy all but excluded international persuasion in the sense defined? The question is too complex for adequate treatment here. But for one important aspect of the answer, we must return to the two-world fantasy. It saw the black world as inwardly bifurcated, in contrast to the white world, which was monolithic. As the previously quoted ideologist of Stalinism put it, "Two forces, two camps, exist in any capitalist country." The second camp in the black world consisted of all those who belonged -- in attitude, in thought, and in deed -- to the white world, who regarded themselves as its citizens living in a foreign land, and who, therefore, submitted to Soviet control voluntarily.
The Stalinist designation for such persons was "proletarian internationalists." The nucleus of the universal fraternity of spiritual citizens of the Soviet Union was, of course, the membership of foreign communist parties. But the fraternity was not confined to this circle. Anybody could belong. The decisive test of belonging was laid down by Stalin in 1927. "He is an internationalist," said Stalin then, "who unreservedly, unhesitatingly and unconditionally is prepared to defend the U.S.S.R., because the U.S.S.R. is the base of the world revolutionary movement."* This reasoning was further elaborated during the period of the cold war. A statement of 1948, for example, refined it as follows: "At the present time the sole and decisive criterion of proletarian revolutionary internationalism is: for or against the U.S.S.R., the fatherland of the international proletariat....Only he is a genuine internationalist who carries his sympathy, respect, recognition to the point of practical and maximum aid, support, and defense of the U.S.S.R. by every means and in various forms....Proletarian internationalism...is unthinkable without love for the U.S.S.R. and selfless devotion to the U.S.S.R. as the

* Sochineniya (Works), Vol. 10, p. 51.
birthplace of socialism and socialist fatherland of the international proletariat."

Note carefully that the criterion for admission to the white camp in the black world was not intellectual; that is, it was not the acceptance of an idea or set of ideas as such. It was rather an act of total self-identification with the Soviet system. It was the participation in a cult, the cult of the U.S.S.R., regarded by definition as the repository of the socialist idea. The criterion did not say: Believe in socialism, accept the socialist idea. It said: Believe in the U.S.S.R. as the fatherland of socialism, accept whatever it tells you as the sacred truth, and do whatever it bids you for its sake.

This difference is more significant than it may seem. It must be borne in mind in analyzing the traumatic effect of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin on thousands of Soviet sympathizers abroad. It also throws light on Stalinism's thinly veiled distrust and contempt for intellectuals. The intellectual is suspect precisely because of his devotion to ideas and principles as such. Every true totalitarianism -- whether Stalin's or Hitler's or any of the others -- tries to

set up complete loyalty and devotion to itself, to the system and the Leader, as the only ultimate principles. Since this is incompatible with the exercise of the critical faculties of the mind, no genuine intellectual can find it attractive.

Returning to the question about propaganda, it is not hard to see why so much effort was expended in this field during the very years when so little attempt was being made at international persuasion. The principal function of the international propaganda was to preserve and foster the cult of the U.S.S.R., and for this reason it may be regarded as essentially an extension of Soviet internal propaganda to the foreign field. The purpose was not to persuade the audience through an appeal to the intellectual faculties; it was rather to indoctrinate participants in the cult, to train "internationalists." That is, it presupposed the surrender of the critical faculties, the will to believe, the prior emotional self-identification in toto with the object of the cult, the U.S.S.R.

Given such identification, everything might be credible, no lie too big to be swallowed as gospel truth. If Moscow, for example, said that the Americans were waging germ warfare in Korea, this -- to the participant in the cult -- had to be
true because Moscow said so; material evidence would be quite secondary in comparison with the evidence afforded by the white world's word. Hence, the basic task of the international propaganda was to furnish continual new material for the cult, to hold aloft day in and day out the glorious glowing image of Soviet reality and at the same time to besmirch to the utmost the image of the enemy camp. The inner content of the cold-war propaganda can therefore be epitomized in ten words: The Soviet world is white; the American world is black. The vital importance of the Iron Curtain as a protective shield for this propaganda fantasy is obvious.

It has been suggested above that the two-world conception was a reflex of the Stalinist drive for total control, which operated at its high point during the period of the cold war. However, the argument now indicates that the relation between these two phenomena was an interactive one. On the one hand, the felt need for absolute control reinforced the image of the world as split in two. But on the other hand, this image, and particularly the projection of the Soviet world as glisteningly white, greatly reinforced the need for control, dictating, for example, all the devices of control summed up in the phrase "Iron Curtain." Thus, one
very important contributing motivation for the Stalinist control drive was the urge to make an illusion about Russia seem real.

The actual fact was that Russia had become in the Soviet period a powerful, industrialized country with an enslaved, miserable, poverty-stricken population, with an economy best described as state monopoly capitalism, and with a political system of the fascist police-state variety; and the empire was an extension of all this to captive peoples abroad. In the official illusion, however, Russia appeared as the realization of man's dream of social utopia, a land of progress and prosperity, where all the economic problems were solved or in process of solution, where culture was in flower, where freedom and justice prevailed, where nearly everybody was happy; and the empire was just an extension of all these benefits to grateful peoples on the periphery.

This was no mere Potemkin village; it was a Potemkin Russia, fabricated not out of wooden façades but out of words and pictures and mass spectacles in Red Square. Absolute centralized control was necessary in order to make the illusion appear to be true. The discrepancy between the Potemkin Russia and the real Russia could be hidden from view so long as the M.V.D. terror machine operated to keep
everything under control, to see to it that nobody revolted, that few if any people got in or out, that everyone in Russia and the satellites pretended to be living in the Potemkin world, that no one spoke the truth out loud, and that articles and books and films complied with the dictates of "socialist realism"; that is, that they depicted the illusion.

But from whose view would the discrepancy be hidden by such means? Not, certainly, from the ordinary Russian's; he realized what kind of Russia he was living in, and that it had nothing in common with the heavenly system portrayed in the propaganda. The Russian and satellite peoples knew all about the discrepancy, knew much more about it than their well-meaning friends in the West who were trying to enlighten them on the point. The bureaucracy knew about it. Even high up in the Politburo much was known about it. For whom, then, was the big show staged? In part it was staged for the "proletarian internationalists" abroad, to keep them comfortably deluded. But the enormous investment of effort that this enterprise of political stagecraft entailed was undertaken mainly for another reason: the crucial spectator was Stalin. It was he who needed the Potemkin Russia. The same force of neurotic self-idealization which underlay the
Stalin cult underlay also the cult of the U.S.S.R. The latter had become an extension of the former: the idealized Russia was a background panorama for the figure of the idealized Stalin.

A passage in Khrushchev's secret report to the XXth Congress gives us an interesting glimpse into Stalin's need for the Potemkin Russia. Khrushchev spoke of the agricultural situation, which was going from bad to worse in Stalin's final years:

All those who interested themselves even a little in the national situation saw the difficult situation in agriculture, but Stalin never even noted it. Did we tell Stalin about this? Yes, we told him, but he did not support us. Why? Because Stalin never traveled anywhere ....He knew the country and agriculture only from films. And these films had dressed up and beautified the existing situation in agriculture. Many films so pictured kolkhoz life that the tables were bending from the weight of turkeys and geese. Evidently, Stalin thought that it was actually so.

Clearly, Khrushchev is not a very good psychologist. He says that Stalin remained ignorant of the crisis in Soviet agriculture because he never traveled anywhere. The point is true but trivial. For it only raises the question: What kept him from traveling around or taking other steps to learn the real state of affairs? The answer is to be found in
Stalin's stringent need for the idealized image of Russia, one aspect of which was the image of kolkhoz prosperity. Naturally, police terror could not produce more grain, or build houses for the workers, or outstrip the U.S.A. in technology, or make the Russian people happy and contented and the satellite peoples grateful to Russia and Stalin. But it could make it seem as though all this was so, and that was its essential function.

The key requisite was total control. Stalinist policy, internal as well as external, was harnessed to a prodigious effort to act out for Stalin an official illusion about Russia and the world. That is why Stalinism rested on Stalin and why his death marked a decisive turn in Russian history and world politics. It knocked the psychological prop out of the structure of Stalinist policy. It removed the motivating source of the politics of megalomania. A stream of changes followed swiftly.

IV.

This psychological revolution forms the proper starting point for an analysis of Soviet policy in the post-Stalin period. In one aspect, it is a story of official Russia's
move to readjust to the real world. In another, it is a story of the failure to carry through the readjustment, and especially of ignorance or disregard of the full extent of popular disaffection in Russia and the satellites. The Malenkov policy, a pale Russian version of what we have come to call "national communism," seemed to reflect some awareness of this; but it fell under the onslaught of Khrushchev, in whom the mentality of the provincial Party officialdom finds its classic expression.

Khrushchev was able and willing to admit that Soviet agriculture was in a mess, that the bureaucratic administration was grossly overcentralized, that Soviet intellectual life was stagnating in its isolation from the world, that the terror had been terribly costly in terms of national progress, and so on. But he would not admit, or could not see, certain other realities, such as the fact that most Russians are heartily sick of such things as five-year plans, the priority of heavy industry, the sacrifice of the present to a future which never comes, and that they will not co-operate voluntarily with a regime which endeavors to reform in the interests of its efficiency rather than their welfare. The present beginnings of an opposition movement from below are the confirmation of this.
Readjustment to the realities of the external world was not so inhibited. After an interlude of relative quiet under Malenkov, the Soviet regime embarked on a dynamic new policy designed to reshape the international environment. This was no longer a policy of cold war in the classic Stalin sense. The cold-war pattern of total belligerency subsided in favor of the slogan of détente, the meeting at the summit, and the challenge to peaceful competition of systems. However, the new policy also was fundamentally anti-Western and anti-American from the start. It was addressed in large part to the breaking up of the Western alliance system, which Stalin's cold war had brought into existence and constantly solidified. It was only the shift of motivation, the subsiding of the drive for total control consequent upon Stalin's death, which made it possible for this to become an operative as distinguished from merely a declared aim of Soviet foreign policy. No longer harnessed to the obsession with absolute control, the new policy expressed an expansionism of Soviet influence, a quest, as it were, for more Finlands rather than more Mongolias, more Afghans rather than more Albanias. It found its most fertile field in the Middle East, where it allied itself with a force of malignant anti-Western
nationalism personified in the would-be totalitarian dictator of the Arab world, Colonel Nasser.

All this was accompanied by a change in the official Soviet image of the world, ratified by the XXth Party Congress. The compulsion to dichotomize the reality representation was no longer operative. The two-world conception faded out, giving way to the picture of one world in which two rival systems of states, the socialist and the capitalist, compete for a preponderance of world influence. This was no longer a Stalinist world of "capitalist encirclement." On the contrary, territories contiguous to the Soviet orbit were now seen as fields for the penetration of Soviet capital, Soviet know-how, Soviet arms, and Soviet ideas. Moscow gave the new Asia the political recognition which Stalin had withheld. This new world of Soviet foreign policy was a world which did not exclude political neutrality, or third forces, or the notion of an uncommitted nation. For countries outside the Soviet bloc, there were alternate roads to socialism, even a parliamentary road. The right-wing socialists were, after all, right-wing socialists. Tito's Yugoslavia was not a capitalist-fascist degeneration, merely a wayward form of people's democracy.
In short, Stalin's successors re-integrated the political universe. The world as projected on the new political map was not a stark contrast in black and white. There were various shades of gray in the non-Soviet part of it, and the gray areas were the focus of the new expansionism of influence. A non-Soviet nation unaligned with the Western military system and friendly to Russia was now described as a "peace zone."

The ambitious new policy envisaged the eventual transformation of the whole of the Eurasian continent into one immense "peace zone," that is, one big zone of preponderant Soviet influence.

When influence is the operative aim, persuasion is a logical means. Hence the new policy placed tremendous emphasis upon the function of persuasion. The revival of diplomacy and trade, the sponsoring of cultural and technical exchange, the encouragement of official contacts at many levels, the drive to normalize relations with many countries, and the participation in previously boycotted international bodies were, from this point of view, ways of persuading countries that they could do business safely and profitably with Russia. Many of the major acts of Soviet foreign policy in 1955 were intended primarily as acts of persuasion. From the standpoint of detaching middle nations from dependence
upon the Western security system, it was imperative to persuade them that the world was safe for non-alignment. The Soviet motivation in bringing about the Geneva summit conference was closely linked with this ulterior aim of persuasion. Austria was evacuated, and the long-delayed treaty signed, largely in order to make of this country a showcase of Soviet willingness to coexist with small neutrals in its vicinity, the idea being to persuade other countries that they too could be Austrias and flourish in peace.

Finally, changes of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe were partly inspired by this aim of persuasion. If independent countries were to be persuaded to disalign themselves from the West and enter into close relationships with the Soviet Union, something had to be done about the satellites; at the very least they had to be made to look less satellitish. One step to be taken was the partial undoing of the Gleichschaltung. Another was the creation of the Warsaw treaty system as a NATO-looking device for retention of Soviet military control of the whole area after control by police terror was relaxed. Further, the potential appeal of Titoism to semi-autonomous Soviet dependencies in Eastern Europe had to be neutralized, and this, it seemed, could best be done by making friends with Tito, or at least making it
appear that friendship was restored. Then Titoism could cease being a symbol of anti-Russianism, and its disruptive force would be negated.

This was the point at which the new policy of international persuasion began to get ahead of itself. Ironically, the trouble sprang in part from the old habit of blinking the distinction between appearance and reality, in this case between the appearance and reality of a Soviet entente with Tito. It was a momentous miscalculation to suppose that a mere façade of entente would serve the Soviet purpose adequately. Actually, it contributed to the ripening of the conditions which produced the explosion of popular wrath in Hungary. The whole boldly-conceived policy of international persuasion came to grief in this explosion. The spectacle of Hungary displayed the Soviet regime to the world as the repressive, imperialist, and antipopular dictatorship that it is. Some countries which had been objects of the new expansionism of influence drew back. Others at least began to have second thoughts about doing much political business with Russia. The scheme of transforming Eurasia into a zone of preponderant Russian influence suffered an incalculable setback. The great campaign to persuade culminated in a crisis of Soviet persuasion.
The crisis involves far more than a diplomatic debacle. It was the impact of Khrushchev's secret attack on the Stalin cult that set the train of events rolling toward the Hungarian catastrophe and the breakdown of the new diplomacy. Another consequence of the anti-Stalin speech, however, was to cut off the path of orderly political retreat. In the act of destroying the Stalin myth, Khrushchev pulled down the whole structure of illusion about Stalin's Russia. The cult of the U.S.S.R., on which the claim to the allegiance of "proletarian internationalists" had been based, was fused with the cult of Stalin. They stood or fell together. Khrushchev's speech inadvertently struck them both down. By revealing what Stalin was, he in effect informed all participants in the cult of the U.S.S.R. that the country which they had lovingly looked upon as the "socialist fatherland" had for twenty years been a fascist despotism just like Hitler's. The reverberations of this thunderbolt are still resounding around the world.

Now we see tendencies to turn back, to re-establish control, to reassume the familiar posture of cold war, even to take a nostalgic new look at old Stalin. Khrushchev
extolls Stalin's virtues in the "struggle against imperialism." The key idea, says Pravda, is the idea of "proletarian internationalism." For example, "proletarian internationalists" know that the Hungarian revolution was really a "counter-revolutionary putsch" and that the Russian armed intervention and bloody suppression of it was really "aid for the cause of socialism and people's democracy." What the Hungarians did only appeared to be a national revolt, and what the Russian army did only appeared to be an intervention. On what grounds should "proletarian internationalists" take this view of the facts? Primarily, on the ground that Russia is the "socialist fatherland" of the workers. We see what this means. It is a call to restoration of the broken structure of illusion.

This is a strategic retreat. But it is no solution for the enormous dilemma before which Soviet policy finds itself today, for, in reality, there can be no going back now. The way back is blocked beyond a very narrow point. The revival of Stalin's methods may be possible to a certain extent. But Stalinism, as this paper has attempted to show, is not just a matter of "methods." Nor will propaganda help, no matter how great the effort. The Potemkin Russia of Stalinism is gone beyond recall. Stalin's death, Khrushchev's attack on Stalin, and all the events that followed, have seen to that.
Over a century ago, Belinsky wrote: "It is time for us to stop seeming, and start being." It is a good text for today's Russians. The future of Russia, one likes to hope, belongs to those forces in Russian society who will rebel at official blurring of the distinction between appearances and reality.